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NEWS from the
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Week of July 4, 1988

BLS REPORTS ON MASS LAYOFFS
AND PLANT CLOSINGS IN 1987

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics has announced that, in the 29 states providing 1987 data in the Bureau's Permanent Mass Layoff and Plant Closing Survey, 2,020 layoff events were reported in 1,678 establishments. These layoffs and plant closings resulted in the separation from their jobs of 406,887 workers, of whom 78 percent (319,343 persons) filed claims for unemployment insurance benefits.

--Of the 319,433 initial claimants for unemployment compensation in the 29 states, about 15 percent were black; 8 percent were Hispanic; 37 percent were women; and 14 percent were over 55 years of age. A total of 85,548 persons exhausted their regular unemployment insurance benefits after being separated from a qualifying establishment. Blacks and adult men who filed as initial claimants were more likely to become exhaustees than whites and women.

In about 13 percent of the layoff events, the plant closed. These 29 states comprise about 55 percent of the nation's employment, but are not necessarily representative of the nation as a whole.

The survey showed that mass layoffs in manufacturing industries far exceeded those in other industries. About 3 out of 5 manufacturing layoffs occurred in the durable goods sector, with most in the electrical equipment, transportation equipment, and nonelectrical machinery industries. In nondurable goods industries, the largest number of layoff events was in food processing, followed by apparel manufacturing. Outside of the manufacturing sector, establishments in construction were most likely to have layoffs, followed by services and trade.

"Slack work" or "seasonal work" was cited most often by the employer as the reason for the layoff. Together, these two categories accounted for half of the layoffs. "Contract completion" accounted for an additional 7 percent of the layoff situations, followed by "business ownership change" (4 percent). Only 2 percent of the layoffs were directly attributed to "import competition." Other survey highlights include:

--More than half the layoffs took place in seven states--Louisiana, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin. About 1 in 4 workers were separated from their jobs in Texas or Wisconsin.

--Since 1986, in 11 states for which data are available for both years, the number of businesses with layoffs declined by one-fifth; the number of layoff situations fell by one-third; and the number of workers separated declined by more than one-fourth. The improvement reflected the overall economic expansion. In those 11 states, employment was up by 10 percent; the number of persons unemployed was down by 8 percent; and unemployment insurance claims fell by 15 percent.

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Table 3. Reason for separation in mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance in 29 states, 1987

Reason for separation	Layoff events	Separations	Initial claimants for unemployment insurance
Total, all reasons1/	2,020	406,887	319,343
Automation	9	951	761
Bankruptcy	43	7,259	5,389
Business ownership change	88	30,955	21,320
Contract cancellation	25	4,168	2,515
Contract completion	147	27,696	23,753
Domestic relocation	49	10,877	7,283
Energy-related disruption	6	888	396
Environment related	4	511	471
Import competition	40	8,328	6,338
Labor-management dispute	43	12,592	9,868
Material shortages	11	1,872	1,324
Model changeover	17	16,441	20,682
Natural disaster	6	561	625
Overseas relocation	30	4,963	4,047
Plant or machine repairs	19	3,146	2,959
Seasonal work	516	101,168	66,521
Slack work	535	94,071	78,239
Vacation period	17	4,161	1,972
Weather-related curtailment	13	1,246	1,143
Other reasons	240	51,207	38,532
Not reported	162	23,826	25,205

1/ See technical note.

Table 4. Percent distribution of mass layoff events, separations, and initial claimants for unemployment insurance in 29 states, 1987

State	Establishments	Layoff events	Separations	Initial claimants for unemployment insurance
Total, 29 states	1,678	2,020	406,887	319,343
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Alabama	3.7	4.1	3.7	3.8
Arizona	3.9	3.8	3.4	3.0
Arkansas	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.2
Indiana	3.5	3.3	3.1	2.6
Iowa	3.2	3.6	2.9	3.1
Kansas	.8	.7	2.1	1.9
Louisiana	5.7	5.8	4.7	5.2
Maine	.7	.6	1.5	1.1
Massachusetts	3.9	3.4	5.4	5.0
Minnesota	6.3	6.5	5.5	5.0
Mississippi	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.5
Missouri	2.4	2.8	5.4	3.5
Montana	.5	.4	.4	.3
Nebraska	.8	.8	.7	.7
Nevada	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
New Hampshire	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
New Jersey	7.6	7.0	6.3	6.5
New Mexico	.9	.7	.7	.6
New York	6.0	5.2	5.9	5.6
North Carolina	4.5	4.8	3.5	3.3
Oklahoma	.7	.7	.7	2.3
Pennsylvania	8.8	8.3	6.4	9.8
South Carolina	2.0	1.7	1.4	1.2
Texas	8.9	8.2	12.7	11.9
Utah	1.3	1.8	1.5	1.5
Vermont	.6	.5	.4	.3
Virginia	2.8	2.6	2.7	2.7
Washington	4.4	4.8	3.7	3.9
Wisconsin	10.5	12.5	10.8	9.7

1/ Data do not meet BLS or state agency disclosure standards.

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Table 5. Selected characteristics of initial claimants for unemployment insurance in mass layoff events in 29 states, 1987

State	Layoff events	Total initial claimants	Percent of total			
			Black	Hispanic origin	Women	Persons over age 55
Total, 29 states	2,020	319,343	15.2	8.3	37.2	13.8
Alabama	82	12,166	9.7	32.2	45.2	32.1
Arizona	77	9,674	25.2	38.7	40.8	7.3
Arkansas	47	7,083	22.9	.2	55.8	10.4
Indiana	67	8,383	8.4	.6	44.0	9.6
Iowa	72	10,037	1.6	1.4	32.4	6.7
Kansas	14	6,182	20.9	3.4	19.7	6.3
Louisiana	117	16,565	34.0	1.5	22.4	8.1
Maine	13	3,531	.2	.1	18.4	7.4
Massachusetts	69	16,120	4.6	3.0	44.8	14.5
Minnesota	131	15,913	1.4	.7	33.0	11.1
Mississippi	52	8,059	71.6	-	68.7	14.6
Missouri	56	11,266	16.7	.4	31.4	7.2
Montana	9	1,090	.5	.8	23.9	9.8
Nebraska	16	2,365	5.3	2.9	41.9	9.3
Nevada	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
New Hampshire	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
New Jersey	142	20,680	18.1	13.2	51.6	22.3
New Mexico	15	1,805	2.8	52.7	51.3	-
New York	105	17,990	12.9	4.6	35.8	15.9
North Carolina	97	10,668	45.8	.3	50.6	11.9
Oklahoma	14	7,504	1.7	.3	21.2	27.0
Pennsylvania	168	31,272	6.9	1.2	14.2	14.8
South Carolina	35	3,864	48.0	.1	70.2	6.8
Texas	166	38,074	14.2	26.5	34.4	16.8
Utah	36	4,732	.6	3.9	44.7	6.0
Vermont	11	1,010	8.1	-	50.2	6.5
Virginia	53	8,689	37.5	-	62.5	15.8
Washington	96	12,298	3.2	13.4	47.5	11.3
Wisconsin	252	30,997	7.7	2.2	32.8	11.0

1/ Data do not meet BLS or state agency disclosure standards.

NOTE: Dash represents zero or rounds to zero.

Table 6. Unemployment insurance exhaustees involved in mass layoff events in 29 states by selected characteristics, 1987

State	Total exhaustees	Percent of total			
		Black	Hispanic origin	Women	Persons over age 55
Total, 29 states	85,548	19.2	8.1	33.8	12.5
Alabama	4,096	19.3	3.9	12.6	11.5
Arizona	2,713	15.4	45.4	42.2	9.7
Arkansas	1,808	22.9	.3	49.4	12.8
Indiana	5,369	23.5	1.1	28.0	11.8
Iowa	1,987	2.2	.4	22.7	6.3
Kansas	1,826	20.5	4.2	28.4	5.9
Louisiana	12,743	36.5	1.3	15.4	8.4
Maine	639	-	.3	39.1	8.6
Massachusetts	3,607	4.1	5.0	60.3	29.3
Minnesota	5,314	1.4	.7	29.4	11.7
Mississippi	1,136	68.5	-	50.6	9.9
Missouri	3,203	19.7	.8	37.7	6.4
Montana	241	1.2	1.2	18.7	10.8
Nebraska	72	23.6	-	59.7	1.4
Nevada	104	1.9	6.7	70.2	22.1
New Hampshire	62	-	-	6.5	21.0
New Jersey	2,269	22.6	19.0	41.7	30.2
New Mexico	323	1.5	61.0	20.7	-
New York	5,113	16.1	8.4	39.2	23.4
North Carolina	1,644	51.0	.2	57.9	11.3
Oklahoma	296	15.9	1.4	45.3	5.7
Pennsylvania	7,576	8.7	.6	33.1	16.8
South Carolina	73	50.7	-	72.6	8.2
Texas	13,380	21.5	25.7	39.6	7.8
Utah	2,076	.3	4.2	28.7	9.2
Vermont	123	5.7	-	53.7	14.6
Virginia	1,464	39.4	-	48.7	12.4
Washington	2,222	4.7	11.3	31.7	13.7
Wisconsin	4,069	7.8	1.6	47.4	14.6

NOTE: Exhaustees refer to those persons who, as a result of a mass layoff or plant closing, filed an initial claim for unemployment insurance during the last half of 1986 or at any time during 1987 and exhausted their regular benefits during 1987, after filing up to 26 weeks of claims. Because some of the above states came into the program during 1986 and because mass layoffs are related to economic conditions and thus were spread unevenly over the 2 years--and, indeed, were heavier in some states during the last half of 1987--the distribution of exhaustees by state can be expected to be quite different in any given year, but particularly in the beginning years of the program. Dash represents zero or rounds to zero.

# # #

Week of July 4, 1988

TASK FORCE ON OLDER WORKERS

WASHINGTON -- The implications of an aging population in the national economy and the role of the older American worker will be examined by a new task force established this month by Labor Secretary Ann McLaughlin.

Statistics show that not only are Americans living longer, but also the "baby boom" generation is now moving into middle age and the reduced birth rate of recent years is expected to continue. The result is that the median age of the population in the year 2000 will be 36, older than at any time in the history of the country.

"Almost every aspect of American life will be affected," says McLaughlin. "We want to look at public policy and retirement systems so we can be prepared for the opportunities and the challenges of a maturing work force."

Throughout the summer and early fall, the Secretarial Task Force on Older Workers will look at the special needs, advantages and problems characteristic of older workers.

Issues will include flexibility and options in pension, health and welfare benefit plan design; retraining techniques tailored for older workers; mobility and flexible work arrangements; physical accommodations for safety and health; dependent elder care and the existing cap on social security income for elderly wage earners.

The 12-member task force is comprised of heads of Labor Department agencies. A report on the task force conclusions and recommendations is planned for the fall of 1988.

# # #

Week of July 4, 1988

THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX--MAY 1988

WASHINGTON -- The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) rose 0.3 percent before seasonal adjustment in May to a level of 117.5 (1982-84=100), the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reports. For the 12-month period ended in May, the CPI-U increased 3.9 percent.

The Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) rose 0.4 percent in May prior to seasonal adjustment. The May 1988 CPI-W level of 116.2 was 3.8 percent higher than the index in May 1987.

The May 1988 indexes for the CPI-U and CPI-W on a 1967=100 reference base were 352.0 and 346.1, respectively.

CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U)

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the CPI-U rose 0.3 percent in May. This compares with increases of 0.5 and 0.4 percent in March and April, respectively. The index for apparel and upkeep, after registering record increases in March and April, was unchanged in May and largely responsible for the more moderate advance in the overall CPI-U. Also contributing to the moderation were smaller increases in the food and beverage and entertainment components. On the other hand, the transportation index, primarily reflecting a rise in gasoline prices, recorded its largest increase since last August.

For the first 5 months of 1988, the CPI-U rose at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.4 percent, the same as that for the 12 months ended in December 1987.

# # #

Week of July 4, 1988

LABOR DEPARTMENT APPOINTS SEATTLE
FEDERAL CONTRACT COMPLIANCE AREA DIRECTOR

SEATTLE -- The U.S. Department of Labor has announced the appointment of Constance (Connie) Moorehead as director of its Seattle Area Office of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), Employment Standards Administration (ESA).

According to Jim Valin, regional administrator for ESA, Mrs. Moorehead will supervise a staff of 16 who ensure that equal employment opportunities are provided to those employed or seeking employment with government contractors or subcontractors. The Seattle Area Office jurisdiction includes Washington state, Alaska and the Idaho panhandle.

After working 17 years in financial accounting for the Boeing Company, Mrs. Moorehead began her federal career as an equal opportunity specialist for the Department of Defense in 1973. She joined the Labor Department in 1978 when equal employment compliance functions were transferred to the department and has served as supervisory equal employment opportunity specialist, and for the last three years as chief of OFCCP regional operations in Seattle.

Mrs. Moorehead has lived with her husband Mike in Seattle for 30 years and has one grown daughter here and one daughter living in Germany.

The Seattle OFCCP area office is located at 909 1st Avenue, Seattle, Wash., 98174; phone (206) 442-7182.

# # #

Week of July 4, 1988

BRENDA JOYCE APPOINTED OFCCP ASSISTANT
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR FOR NEW ENGLAND REGION

BOSTON -- Brenda Joyce has been appointed assistant regional administrator for the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) of the U.S. Department of Labor in Boston.

In making the announcement, Walter P. Parker, regional administrator for the department's Employment Standards Administration (ESA), which includes OFCCP, said, "Brenda Joyce brings to this position a proven commitment to OFCCP's law enforcement and public service goals. Her 23 years in government service, including 10 years with the department, attest to Joyce's impressive record of accomplishment and dedication in the areas of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity."

As assistant regional administrator, Joyce will be responsible for managing and enforcing affirmative action requirements for federal contractors in the six-state Boston Region, which includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.

Prior to her appointment in Boston, she was area office director for OFCCP in San Jose, Calif. Beginning in 1978, she served as supervisory equal opportunity specialist for OFCCP's area office in Dallas.

Joyce's civil service career began as a clerk-typist in 1965 when she worked for the department of the Army's procurement division at Fort Benning, Ga. During the Vietnam War she progressed to a staffing clerk for the personnel department, also at Fort Benning. Later, Joyce followed her husband, and Army officer, to Okinawa where she worked for the Armed Forces Military Police as a distribution supervisor.

During her government service, Joyce has received recognition for her work in affirmative action, including special achievement and three performance awards.

Joyce has a B.A. in English from the University of Texas and has studied for an MBA at Texas Christian University.

She and her husband have a son and daughter, both adults.

# # #

Week of July 4, 1988

FILLERS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The first legislation dealing with child labor was a Massachusetts Bay court order in 1640 calling for town magistrates to investigate the possibility of "teaching the boys and girls in all towns the spinning of the yarn," according to "Labor Firsts in America," a U.S. Labor Department publication.

# # #

The first investigation into the relationship between child labor and school attendance was in Massachusetts in 1825. Partly due to this inquiry, a child labor law was passed in 1836, according to "Labor Firsts in America," a publication by the U.S. Labor Department.

# # #

The first state law restricting child labor was in 1836 in Massachusetts. It stated that no child under the age of 15 shall work in "manufacturing establishments" unless the child attended school for at least three of the 12 months preceding any year of employment, according to "Labor Firsts," a publication by the U.S. Labor Department.

# # #

In 1933 the first federal legislation to set a minimum age for child labor was passed, setting an age limit of 16 for general work and 18 for hazardous jobs. The law was declared unconstitutional in 1935, but similar minimum age requirements were reinstated with the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, according to "Labor Firsts in America," a publication by the U.S. Labor Department.

# # #